

BOOK REVIEWS

FUNDAMENTALS OF CLINICAL FLUOROSCOPY — With Essentials of Roentgen Interpretation. By Charles B. Storch, M.D., Adjunct, Radiodiagnostic Department and Radiotherapy Department, Beth-El Hospital, Brooklyn, N. Y. Grune and Stratton, New York, 1951. 196 pages. \$6.75.

The stated purpose of this monograph is to "give the basic knowledge, indicate capacity and limitations, and make the actual learning process easier." In a group of six chapters the author takes you through the mechanics of production of the fluoroscopic image, the dangers of roentgenoscopy and the importance of adequate dark adaptation. Next come chapters on fluoroscopic examination of the chest, the heart, the upper alimentary tract, the stomach and finally the colon.

Most of the illustrations are good, but in order to indicate anatomic relationships, they are drawn as they would appear on a fully illuminated fluoroscopic screen. No experienced physician interested in his own or his patient's bone marrow will use a fully illuminated large fluoroscopic screen for more than a fraction of a second. This point cannot be overstressed, and it might be desirable for subsequent editions of the book to illustrate just the diagrams and omit the outline of the fully irradiated fluoroscopic screen.

The author is assistant radiologist at the Beth-El Hospital, New York, and a graduate of Edinburgh. The manual can be recommended for students and beginners in fluoroscopy, and if properly studied, will undoubtedly make the learning process easier. However, since fluoroscopic examination is only part of the roentgen examination of most of the viscera discussed, it is to be questioned whether the manual will really serve the purpose of improving the quality of diagnostic radiology.

The vast majority of the illustrations are from roentgenograms, not from photofluorograms or films made with the fluoroscope. They may, therefore, lead the uninitiated into excessive reliance on fluoroscopy alone.

The author indicates, but does not stress with adequate frequency, the important point that "The time to make the roentgenogram is when the fluoroscopic appearance is negative." If this important dictum were followed, more small and curable lesions would unquestionably be detected.

There are 217 illustrations and a fairly adequate bibliography.

* * *

AMINO ACIDS AND PROTEINS—Theory, Methods and Application. Compiled and Edited by David M. Greenberg, Ph.D., Professor of Biochemistry and Chairman of the Division, University of California School of Medicine, Berkeley, California. Charles C. Thomas, Publisher, Springfield, Illinois, 1951. 950 pages. \$15.00.

This collaborative project by a group of outstanding contributors under the direction of Professor David Greenberg reviews in concise but complete form the broad field of the amino acids and proteins. The first four chapters concern properties of amino acids and methods for their determination. Subsequent chapters cover nutritional applications and metabolism. The remainder of the book describes the chemistry, physical properties, and biological importance of the proteins. To compress such an enormous subject into a book of reasonable size, some subjects are covered only in outline, supplemented by an extensive bibliography. This volume should serve as a useful and readable source of concise information for the advanced student or investigator, and as a valuable source of references to the extensive literature of the field. The physician might find much of the subject matter somewhat technical in nature, but the volume should prove useful as a reference work.

NATURAL CHILDBIRTH — A Manual for Expectant Parents. By Frederick W. Goodrich, Jr., M.D. Prentice-Hall, Inc., New York, 1950. 176 pages. \$2.95.

This book contains information which every expectant mother and father should acquire. It combines the usual prenatal information and instructions regarding the hygiene of pregnancy with the pertinent anatomical and physiological facts of pregnancy, and a detailed explanation of the events and routines to be expected both in the office and in the delivery room. In addition, it outlines the methods in use at Yale which in recent years have been heavily flavored with the advices of Grantly Dick Read. Emphasis is placed upon antenatal instruction to prospective mothers and fathers (this book might well serve as a manual for such a course), a series of exercises designed to enable the parturient to relax her muscles in labor so that the forces of nature may work more efficiently and with the production of less discomfort (excellent diagrams are included), rooming-in, and breast feeding. The book is written on the thesis that preparation for childbearing would convert an experience which is often disagreeable to one which is happy and emotionally satisfying to both the mother and the father of the newborn child. It presupposes that most of the disagreeable features of pregnancy and labor are due to fear (of the unknown and unfamiliar) which in turn leads to tension, which interferes with the efficiency of the body processes and leads to pain. It seeks to dispel fear by information and to supply an additional corrective for tension by teaching the art of relaxation.

Whether or not one subscribes to all of the routines suggested, the aims of the book are laudable, its tone is sympathetic and persuasive, and the information supplied is accurate and adequate without being wordy. (There are 168 pages.) It would be an excellent book to recommend to one's obstetrical patients.

My only criticism of the book is as follows: It tends to suggest that until the concept of "natural childbirth" came along, obstetrical practice was barbarous. The statement is made, "Pregnancy and labor still mean for most women nine long months of discomfort, followed by an experience which at best is extremely distasteful and at worst an ordeal." I do not believe that this is true and I feel that it may be harmful to plant this thought in the minds of the uninitiated. Many obstetricians who might otherwise like to use this book because of its numerous good qualities, might hesitate to do so because of this concept and because it might commit them to routines and practices which they do not employ.

* * *

TOXAEMIAS OF PREGNANCY—Human and Veterinary. A Ciba Foundation Symposium. 93 illustrations. The Blackiston Company, Philadelphia, 1950. 280 pages. \$4.50.

This volume contains 26 original contributions presented a little over a year ago in London. Some are rather short notes, while others are quite comprehensive. Most of the articles are concerned with the specific toxemia of human pregnancy, but there are six dealing with pregnancy disorders in sheep or cows. These appear to be metabolic diseases such as hypocalcemia, ketosis or copper deficiency, and while they are of obvious importance in the field of veterinary medicine, they bear no resemblance to human toxemia and seem somewhat out of place in this symposium.

About half of the presentations dealing with toxemia of pregnancy in women are excellent, and for that reason alone the volume should be of interest to every obstetrician. The

pathology, hormonal changes and enzymatic aspects are each dealt with in three articles, while five are concerned with circulatory changes and five with etiologic considerations.

Several of the contributions should be singled out for special mention. The description of the pathological lesions in the hypertensive toxemias, presented by H. L. Sheehan, is superb and leaves one with the wish that this all too brief section might be expanded to monographic proportions. Dieckmann details his studies of the effects of intravenous sodium salts on the course of toxemia. He establishes the fact that 25 grams of salt per day causes an exacerbation of the toxemia syndrome in most cases (two developed convulsions and two others pulmonary edema). The protocols are of special interest, for it is doubtful whether any further reports on this type of "treatment" will appear.

Professor Kellar gives an excellent summary of the circulatory alterations in both normal and toxemic pregnancy, and Catherine Burt presents her original studies of forearm and hand blood flow during gestation. C. L. Schneider, who has written extensively in the last several years about the relation of placental thromboplastin to various complications of late pregnancy, presents a fine review of this new and intriguing subject.

With respect to etiology, the section by Theobald seems to give evidence of rather gray thinking, and Falkner's advocacy of the placental infarct theory is somewhat trivial. Bastiaanse and Mastboom of Amsterdam present their views on the relationship of ischemia of the gravid uterus to the cause of eclampsia. This is a concept promulgated a decade ago by American investigators and further elaborated on a number of occasions since. Bastiaanse's contribution might have been improved had he chosen to refer to such work and bring it into focus with his own views.

Sommerville, deWatteville and Loraine present short articles on the hormone changes in toxemia and each of them is stimulating by virtue of instilling doubts about our prevailing concepts.

* * *

THE SCIENCE OF HEALTH. By Florence L. Meredith, B.Sc., M.D., Fellow of the American Medical Association, American Public Health and American Psychiatric Associations. Second edition. The Blakiston Company, Philadelphia, 1951. 452 pages. \$3.75.

Should one be charitable with authors who write short texts for college hygiene courses? That there is a demand for such books is certain; whether it should be indulged is doubtful, for by reducing a large and complex subject to small compass, the student may be given a false sense of values. The only justifications are that behavior may be modified in a way conducive to good health in students who will not or cannot take a more complete course, or that a short course and a short text may arouse interest which will lead to further study. The difficulties inherent in this situation are extremely troublesome, and it takes courage to attempt the task. Dr. Meredith has made a worthy effort to condense her longer "Hygiene," and has added some new material, but whether this volume will accomplish the purposes mentioned is doubtful. It touches upon mortality and morbidity statistics, anatomy and physiology, body responses to injury, first aid, a wide variety of disease processes, mental health, and sexual functions. Caution has been exercised to avoid strong statements which might be objectionable to practicing physicians, and thus it loses impact for the authoritative drive toward healthful behavior. At the same time, the explanations are inadequate to motivate health habits on a reasoned basis, and often so superficial as neither to satisfy or stimulate further study.

Dr. Meredith excels in the presentation of material on mental health, and this portion of her book can be used by practicing physicians as prescribed reading for patients with minor anxieties, particularly those in the young adult group.

It seems strange that although mental hygiene is handled by itself very well, its principles are neglected in other parts of the book. For example, it is implied that the individual should compute his caloric needs and accurately adjust his intake to meet them. This may be a valuable exercise for the hygiene student, but to be saddled with it as a continuing necessity for maintaining good health can hardly promote peace of mind.

The outstanding deficiencies of the book are the failure to focus attention on the wonderful capacity of the human organism for adjusting to environmental changes, and insufficient emphasis on the community aspects of health promotion. Its outstanding value is its reiteration of the admonition to seek competent professional advice when things go wrong.

* * *

THE EXCEPTIONAL CHILD IN INFANCY AND EARLY CHILDHOOD—Proceedings of the Annual Spring Conference on Education and the Exceptional Child under the Auspices of the Child Research Clinic of The Woods Schools at Langhorne, Pennsylvania, May, 1950. Six papers, 48 pages. No charge.

This pamphlet has some exceedingly interesting material on its subject. It is a compilation of a series of lectures and presentations given by various doctors and psychologists. The first one of these is by Randolph K. Byers and is on the early recognition of developmental handicaps. The second one, by Margaret E. Fries, is on the early factors in establishing object relationship. Included in this was a film on the lying-in period which, of course, could not be reproduced; but the article itself is still rich in material. The third is by Ethel B. Waring, Ph.D., on exceptional children and principles for their guidance. The others cover such subjects as play as a learning process, the eating patterns of normal and exceptional children, and the development of oral language in children.

* * *

THE AUDIOLOGY CLINIC—A Manual for Planning a Clinic for the Rehabilitation of the Acoustically Handicapped. By Moe Bergman, Ed.D., Chief Audiologist, Audiology Clinic, New York Regional Office, Veterans Administration, New York City, U. S. A. *Acta Oto-Laryngologica*, Supplementum LXXXIX, 1950. The Audiology Foundation, 1104 Wabash Avenue, Chicago 5, Illinois. \$1.00.

The philosophy of rehabilitation of the hard of hearing and the deaf was set forth and expanded during World War II. The Veterans Administration has since carried on aural rehabilitation in centers throughout the country. The author has described in detail the Veterans Administration's first audiology clinic established in New York City. The monograph sets forth the necessary physical space for various phases of aural rehabilitation and details of its arrangement. The soundproofed suite of rooms is particularly interesting since construction plans are included. Block diagrams outline the electro-acoustical equipment used. The qualifications of personnel are amply noted. The over-all organization of the clinic is shown in detail. The description of this particular clinic by the author is adequate. It must be remembered by the student that this set-up is unique and serves a limited area and number of patients. Such an elaborate clinic is expensive to build and maintain and is not within the budget of universities or colleges. However, for those persons interested in modest programs of aural rehabilitation this monograph can be used advantageously for reference since it includes all organizational phases of the subject, even to the point of listing manufacturers of electro-acoustical equipment.

This is the first successful comprehensive attempt by any author to bring together all the multiple organizational phases of the subject and in the field of aural rehabilitation this monograph will take its place as a standard for other workers. As the author points out, the details of specific communicative skills are not included, so such information must be sought elsewhere.